COMIC SHOP NEWS

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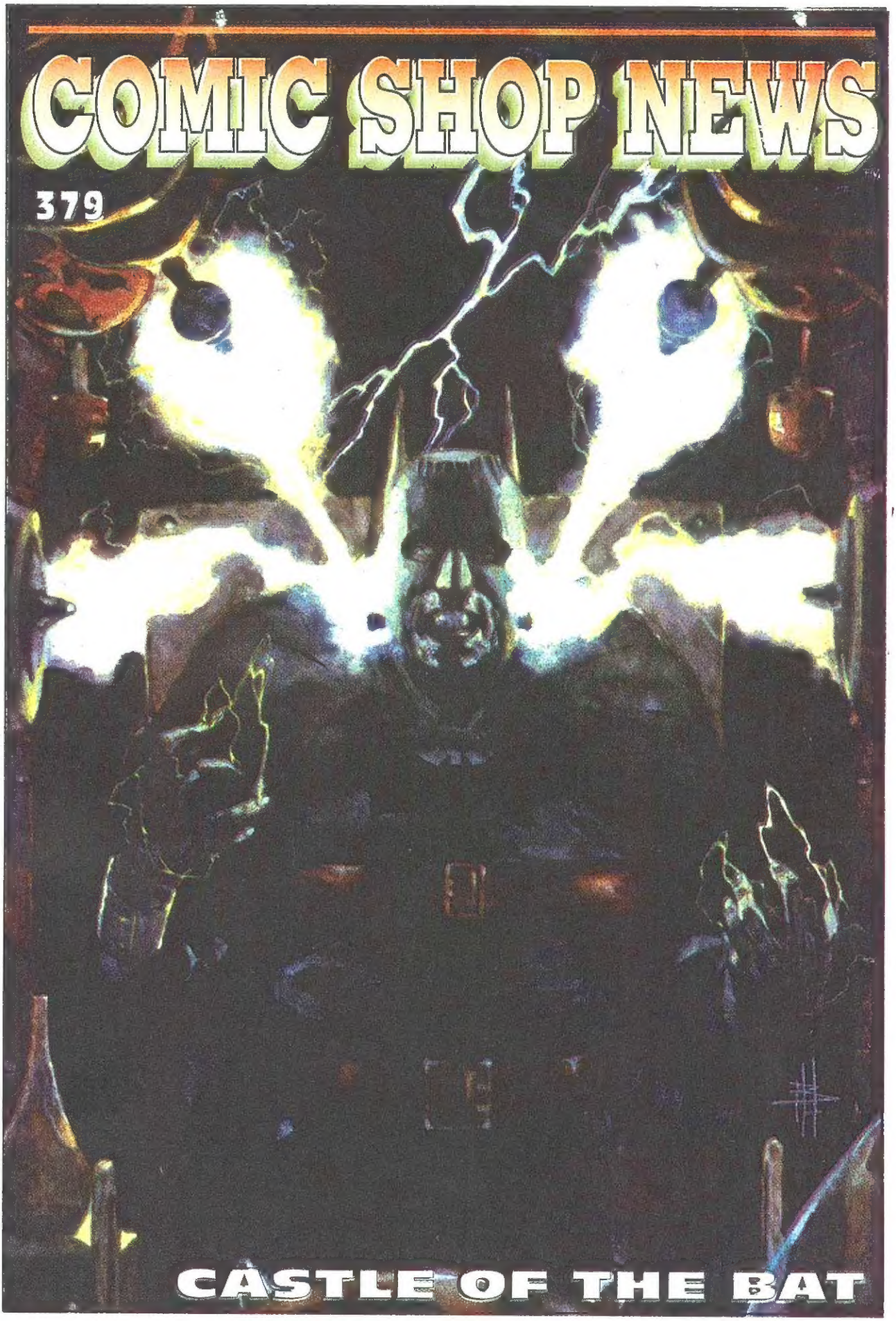

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Presenting a Frank-ly Shocking Elseworlds Batman Tale

No hero has been the subject of as many Elseworlds tales as Batman; in recent years, fans have thrilled to tales of a vampiric Batman, a lone hero battling a theocratic tyranny, a Victorian avenger, and more. But in the newest Elseworlds graphic novel, DC presents an outré tale that merges the Batman legend with a familiar tale created one and three quarter centuries ago by Mary Shelley.

Batman: Castle of the Bat, a compelling Elseworlds tale written by Jack C. Harris and lavishly painted by Bo Hampton, offers an intriguing new take on the Frankenstein legend, combining that tale of renewed life with Batman's elements of death and vengeance.

Set in the 18th Century, this story depicts Bruce Wayne as a man obsessed by his father's brutal murder. In this alternate reality, though, Thomas Wayne was a scientist who, like Erasmus Darwin, had theories about the essence of life and how it might be restored. As Bruce Wayne gradually discovers his father's secret work, he begins to realize that it might be possible to bring Thomas Wayne back to life!

This gothic tale takes an intriguing and unexpected twist, though, when Bruce Wayne attempts to use his own scientific knowledge to bring life to the body he has created—a body that houses the brain of Thomas Wayne, which has been secretly stored in the anatomical vaults of Wayne Castle, immersed in a unique liquid that has preserved its life. Bruce scientific expertise proves insufficient for the immense task at hand, and his own research in bat biochemistry leads to a tragic error that results in the creation of a monstrous Man-Bat... a Man-Bat driven by the distorted mind of Thomas Wayne.

Soon, it's up to Bruce Wayne to set things right by destroying the Man-Bat. But can Bruce Wayne bring himself to cause his father to suffer a second death?...

Batman: Castle of the Bat is a 64-page prestige-format Elseworlds graphic novel edited by Dennis O'Neil. The $5.95 book is scheduled for November 10th release.

by LANNY LATHEM

Liefeld Takes His Non-Superhero Concepts to the Max

Rob Liefeld was the creator of the first superhero title ever published by Image Comics; in the two and a half years since that time, Liefeld and his Extreme Studios crew have created a wide variety of superhero titles featuring both teams and individual heroes. As closely associated as Liefeld is with the superhero genre, though, he has a number of ideas that don't fit in with the superhero-oriented Image Universe. And, beginning this December, Liefeld and Extreme will be able to take those concepts to their Maximum limits as part of a new comics imprint.

Maximum Press, a new imprint that focuses on non-superhero comics and graphic novels, will serve as the comics home for all the concepts that Liefeld has created that just don't fit in with the interrelated Image Universe. "Upcoming series offered from Maximum Press willl feature stoires that are more science-fiction and fantasy oriented, as well as horror and romance books," Rob Liefeld said. "Diversification is what we're aiming for here at Maximum Press!"

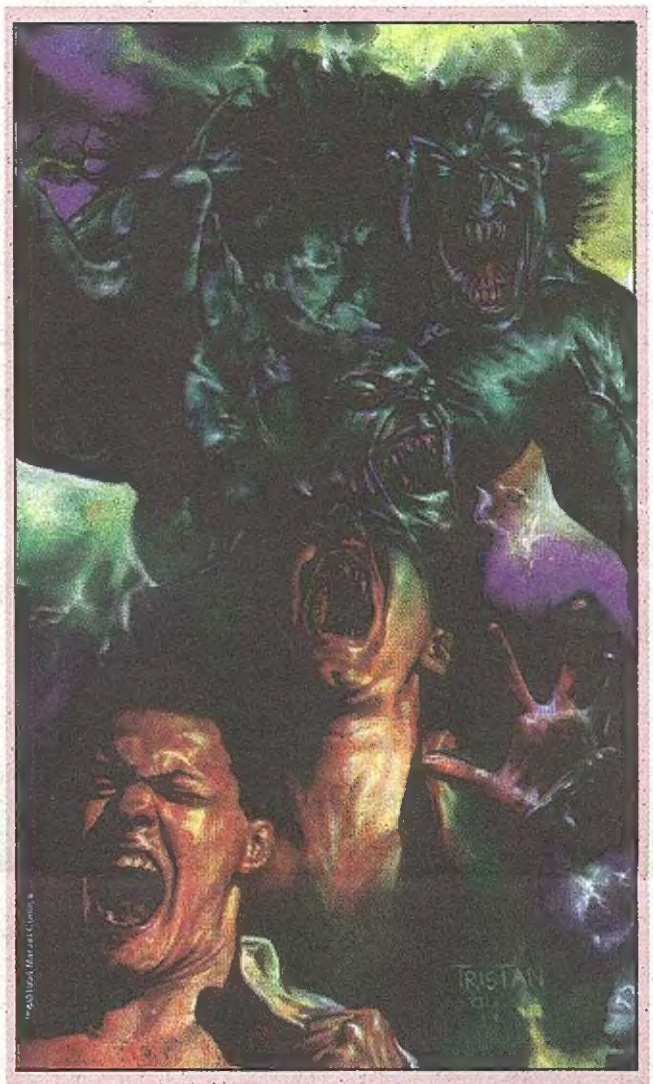
The first Maximum Press release is ***Warchild,*** described by Maximum Press marketing vice-president Matt Hawkins as "a sword 'n' sorcery, science fiction epic in the same vein as ***Highlander, Excalibur,*** and the ***Star Wars*** films." If the characters look at all familiar, it's very possible that you've seen them before. "Warchild's featured characters, Sword and Stone, first debuted in a three-page story byLiefeld that ran in ***Wizard #23,***" Hawkin said. Plans to serialize the storyline in ***Wizard*** didn't pan out, but Liefeld didn't forget about the concept; when talk of a new non-superhero imprint led to the creation of Maximum, it was only natural that the already-developed ***Warchild*** should be the first book.

"The characters from ***Warchild*** have been around for some time," Liefeld said. "This is a story I've been wanting to tell ever since I began my career in comics, but I never had the time to devote to it... This fantastic adventure encompasses all time and space and portrays the life of a young boy who is accidentally thrown into the midst of a war between good and evil. 'Sword' is the boy's name and 'Stone' is his cyborg ally. During their incredible journey through time, they team with a young girl named Merlyn and together they must battle the Black Knight and his Legion of Darkness."

Warchild will be written by Rob Liefeld and Eric Stephenson (writer and editor of several Extreme titles). The art is supplied by ***Team Youngblood*** artist Chap Yaep. "Chap's enthusiasm for this project was the key factor in our decision to go ahead with ***Warchild,"*** Liefeld said. "Chap's work has been improving at an alarming rate. His work is bold, dynamic, visually stunning, and beautifully rendered. Thanks to Chap, ***Warchild*** will stand out as one of the best looking comics on the stands today.... [Eric Stephenson] and Chap are no strangers, having worked on the first eleven issues of ***Team Youngblood*** together. They're very excited about bringing their collaborative efforts to this project."

Warchild debuts in December; additional Maximum Press titles will be added to the company's line throughout 1995.

by CLIFF BIGGERS



A Banner Premiere For a Non-Banner Hulk

Marvel's latest 2099 premiere isn't exactly a premiere, but that doesn't stop it from being a major event nonetheless. When ***Hulk 2099*** gets his own series this fall, it won't be the first appearance of the character—after all, he has been a star of ***2099 Unlimited*** since its beginning. However, it will be the first new 2099 title added in over six months—and since it's a book with an already-established following, its success is all but guaranteed!

According to Joey Cavalieri, the editor of Marvel's 2099 titles, readers "really warmed up to the stories in ***2099 Unlimited*** done by Gerry Jones, Dwayne Turner, Kyle Baker, J.J. Burch, Fred Harper, and Khato. The response was encouraging enough to go for a ***Hulk 2099*** monthly. Gerry Jones, Malcolm Davis, and Chris Ivy have something special here in Hulk 2099..."

Hulk 2099 is John Eisenhart, an executive in the film industry. "A weasel Hollywood greedhead" is how Eisenhart describes himself (courtesy of writer Gerard Jones). Eisenhart's greed led him into a situation in which he was transformed into a massive, monstrous green creature known as Hulk 2099. In spite of his distorted, hideous appearance, Hulk 2099 retains the human persona of Eisenhart, making him even more dangerous to those who cross paths with him.

In ***Hulk 2099 #1***, Eisenhart is ready to leave his job as an executive for the film company Lotusland—but he's not ready to turn the company over to the scheming Draco, a manipulative villain who tries to set up a hostile takeover of Lotusland. Eisenhart soon discovers that Draco may be a match for the Hulk, though—and the life of someone very close to him is threatened by Draco's schemes.

Hulk 2099 #1 follows in the 2099 tradition: the premiere issue features a foil-stamped cover. The $2.50 comic is scheduled for October 13th release.

by ALEX KIRKLAND

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From Your Friendly Neighborhood Comics Outlet
Printed on 100% Recycled Newsprint

Very Vicious Universe

Now here's a killer concept for a card series... quite literally! Topps is joining forces with Dark Horse to produce an all-new ninety-card series featuring two of the most deadly alien races ever depicted in science fiction. The ***Aliens/Predator Universe Trading Card Series,*** which is fully authorized by 20th Century Fox, mixes artwork from the various Dark Horse comics (by *Dave Dorman, Simon Bisley, Mike Mignola, Kelley Jones, John Bolton, Mark A. Nelson, Brian Stelfreeze, Chris Warner, Arthur Suydam,* and others) with original "New Visions" art produced especially for this card series by such talents as *Adam Hughes, Jim Valentino, Esteban Maroto,* and *Rebecca Guay.* Aliens completists will consider this series a must-have as well, since it features *Denis Beauvais'* long-awaited return to ***Aliens*** in a special fifteen-card adventure serial, "Operation: Alien," that depicts a battle between a band of Colonial Marines and the always-deadly aliens; and if that's not enough to make this a must-have for comics fans, *Chris Warner* supplies the art for a special ***Aliens Vs. Predator*** fifteen-card battle subset. Each card is UV-coated on both sides and foil stamped in the same manner as the ***Star Wars Galaxy*** trading cards. The ***Aliens/Predator Universe Trading Card Series,*** packaged in eight-card packs priced at $1.75 per pack, should launch a comic shop attack in late October.

What's Opera, Doc Watson?

Arthur Conan Doyle meets *Gaston LeRoux* this fall, courtesy of *Steven Jones* and *Aldin Baroza.* ***Sherlock Holmes: Adventure of the Opera Ghost #1,*** a two-issue miniseries from Caliber Press, brings together Sherlock Holmes, Doctor Watson, and the Phantom of the Opera in a story set at the Paris Opera House in the late 1800's. The series is scheduled for biweekly publication, guaranteeing that fans won't have to wait more to see what happens when these two literary legends meet. ***Sherlock Holmes: Adventures of the Opera Ghost #1,*** a $2.95 comic, is scheduled for early October release.

An Entertaining Trek

This fall, ***Entertainment Weekly*** is preparing to go where no major magazine has gone before—deep into the universe of ***Star Trek***! While EW can't be accused of having ignored ***Star Trek***'s various incarnations in the past (in fact, one of its ***Star Trek*** cover-story issues is the best selling ***EW*** of all time), the magazine is about to produce its first special collector's issue devoted entirely to the world of ***Star Trek.*** ***Entertainment Weekly Presents The Ultimate Guide for Star Trek—For All Generations*** will feature a minimum of 96 pages of photos, articles, and behind-the-scenes info concerning ***Star Trek, Star Trek: The Next Generation, Star Trek: Deep Space Nine,*** the ***Star Trek*** films (including the upcoming ***Star Trek: Generations,*** uniting cast members from ***Star Trek*** and ***ST: TNG***), and the newest ***Star Trek*** television series ***Star Trek: Voyager.*** To make sure that fans don't miss this landmark issue, DC Comics has arranged to get this magazine into your local comic shops several days ahead of its normal newsstand distribution. ***EW's Ultimate Guide to Star Trek,*** a $3.95 magazine, is scheduled for October 13th release.

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CSNsider

It's been a rough summer for several comic book publishers: word has it that Dagger, Defiant, Lightning, and Triumphant have all suspended operations in the past few weeks; while some of these companies may be able to return to comics in one form or another in the next few months, the sad news is that Defiant is definitely dead, even before fans could find out just where ***Schism*** was taking the Defiant line; *Jim Shooter* will soon be seen as writer of *Rob Liefeld*'s ***Youngblood,*** though—and there's no doubt that Shooter will be back in publishing again, soon... SkyBox is producing a ***Star Trek: Generations*** trading card series for December release... Comics have been the focus of more on-line attention than ever before recently: AOL is going strong with DC On-Line, CompuServe's Comics/Animation Forum and Comics Publishers Form are generating all sorts of activity from fans and pros alike, and now TeknoComix has announced plans to go on-line with Prodigy... *JimCarrey* is reportedly interested in supplying his voice for ***The Mask*** animated series... *Colleen Doran* is working on a miniseries for Milestone... The recent move of ***GI Joe*** from Marvel to Image may be the first of several rounds of the licensed-property shuffle, now that comics-licensing has become a big-bucks source of supplemental revenue for toy manufacturers and film studios... Graphitti Designs has a number of new DC-inspired shirts in the works, including ***Azrael*** by *Kelley Jones,* ***Swamp Thing*** by *Simon Bisley,* ***Catwoman*** by *Adam Hughes,* ***Sandman*** by *Dave McKean,* and ***Death*** by *Chris Bachalo*...

Akira Gets Back In Gear

Remember ***Akira?*** Judging from the phenomenal number of letters that we at ***CSN*** have received from fans wanting to know what's happened with the final volumes of that series, there are lots of you who remember *Katsuhiro Otomo*'s hard-edged, high-energy series about life in Neo-Tokyo. Well, after far too many months of inactivity, ***Akira*** is on the move again. This November, Graphitti Designs will release ***Akira Volume Five,*** a four-hundred-plus page $45.95 hardcover that reprints six more chapters of Otomo's saga in full color; each book will be individually numbered and will feature an exclusive frontispiece illustration, illustrated endpapers, and high-quality Smyth-sewn binding. There will only be 1500 copies of this deluxe hardcover, so don't hesitate if you're interested—talk to the friendly folks at your local comic shop ASAP.

But what about the final issues of Marvel's ***Akira*** series? According to sources at Marvel, work is progressing towards wrapping up the series, and it's likely that Akira will return to the comic racks in early '95. And soon after Marvel completes their ***Akira*** run, Graphitti will collect the final installments in ***Akira Volume Six***, which Graphitti's *Bob Chapman* is confident will see print sometime in 1995. And there's more good news: after a several-months absence from the comic shop video racks, ***Akira*** will soon be available again on videotape at an even lower price; look for it in mid-October.

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Sometime between December and February the 50 Millionth copy of CSN will be distributed. The lucky fan who picks it up will win a $500 shopping spree in that shop. We'll pay the retailer $500 cash and the winner gets to
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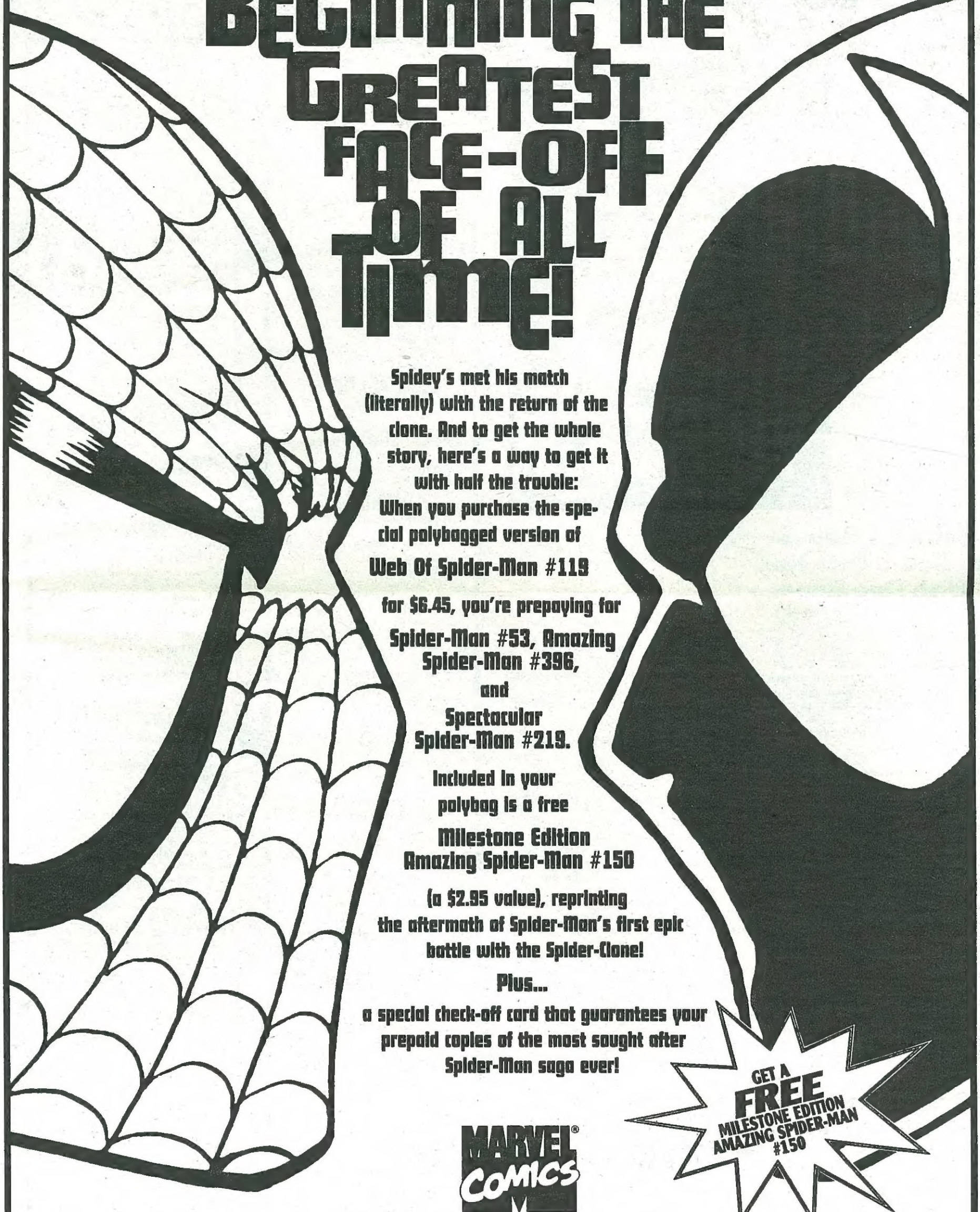

Beginning The Greatest Face-Off Of All Time!

Spidey's met his match (literally) with the return of the clone. And to get the whole story, here's a way to get it with half the trouble: When you purchase the special polybagged version of

Web Of Spider-Man #119

for $6.45, you're prepaying for

Spider-Man #53, Amazing Spider-Man #396,

and

Spectacular Spider-Man #219.

Included in your polybag is a free

Milestone Edition Amazing Spider-Man #150

(a $2.95 value), reprinting the aftermath of Spider-Man's first epic battle with the Spider-Clone!

Plus...

a special check-off card that guarantees your prepaid copies of the most sought after Spider-Man saga ever!

GET A FREE MILESTONE EDITION AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #150

MARVEL® COMICS

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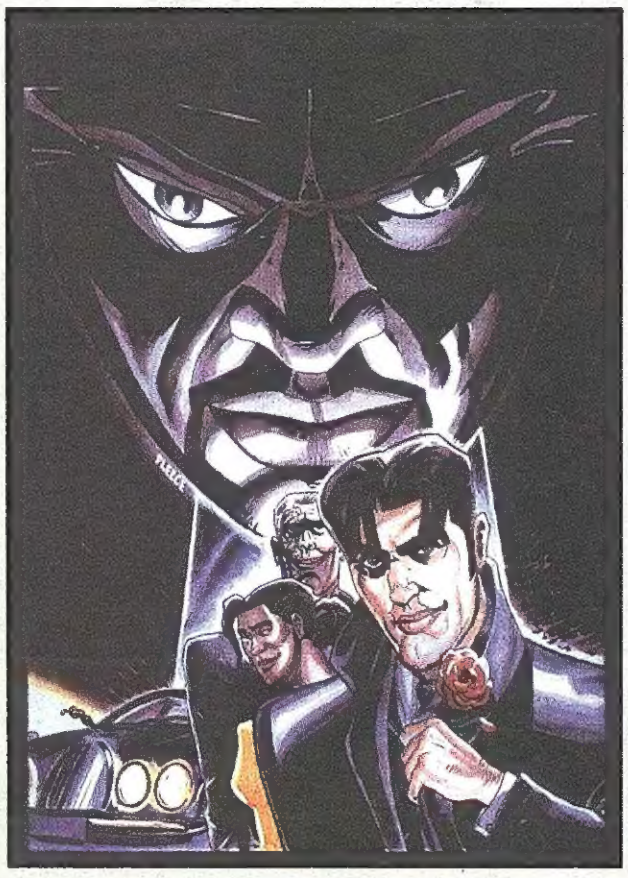
Vertigo Opens Fire With Mobfire

Crime takes on a dark new twist in ***Mobfire,*** a six-issue Vertigo limited series debuting this fall. The criminals not only arm themselves with automatic weapons and sharp instruments, but they also call on demons and mystical forces in their war with the law... and with one another.



Jack Kellor is the reluctant new head of London's most powerful mob family—but if Jack has his way, his reign will be short-lived. Jack would like to break the cycle of evil that has been passed on to him from his family, but he finds that getting away from his heritage much more difficult than he ever imagined. Before long, he's engaged in a power struggle with the Bocor, his former right-hand mage. The demonic struggle even attracts the attention of ***Hellblazer***'s John Constantine, who makes a cameo in the first issue.

Mobfire is written by *Gary Ushaw* and illustrated by *Warren Pleece*; the first issue, priced at $2.50, is scheduled for October 13th release.

Saltares Hopes to Score One Hit With One Rune

Following up *Barry Windsor-Smith* as artist on any book is a difficult task—but that hasn't deterred *Javier Saltares* from taking on the art honors of ***Rune*** beginning with the seventh issue of this popular Ultraverse title. Windsor-Smith, who has illustrated the first six issues, is remaining on hand as editor of the title, while *Chris Ulm* will continue to write the series.

"I'm going to make ***Rune*** my best work ever," Saltares said. "I've definitely done homework for this series, and I've put more heart into ***Rune*** than ever before. I'm really eager to get back into the swing of working on comics, and ***Rune*** is a great way to get started. It's unlike anything I've worked on before, and I'm eager to see what everyone thinks." Saltares has signed on as artist for a minimum of three issues.

Rune #7 not only introduces a new artist to the title, it also kicks off a new storyline that takes Rune back in time to the AFrican city of Samanguru, where Rune must confront the servants of the evil god Argos, who has the potential to destroy the fabric of reality. ***Rune #7,*** a $1.95 comic, is scheduled for October release.

Solo Symbiote

Eddie Brock... alone?

For years now, Eddie Brock and Venom have been pretty much synonymous... but that won't be the case after ***Spider-Man #53*** hits the stands! This issue depicts a major confrontation between Venom and the Spider-Man clone—and the result of this battle is the separation of Eddie Brock and the symbiote! *Howard Mackie*, *Tom Lyle*, and *Scott Hanna* handle the creative honors for this eventful issue; look for it on October 20th.

A storyline this important can't just end here, though—and rest assured that it doesn't! A week later, ***Venom: Separation Anxiety*** follows the now symbiote-less Eddie Brock, who soon realizes just how lonely solo life is: he's attacked by the five supposedly dead symbiotes from ***Venom: Lethal Protector,*** and Eddie Brock by himself is scarcely a match for such powerful enemies! If the Eddie Brock-Venom combination had such a hard time defeating these symbiotes, then how can Brock hope to win such a confrontation by himself? The action begins in ***Venom: Separation Anxiety #1,*** an October 27th release written by *Howard Mackie* and illustrated by *Ron Randall* and *Sam DeLaRosa*—but will Eddie Brock be able to survive until the series' fourth and final issue?...

Comics' Greatest World Pulled Into the Vortex

Readers of the current ***Comics' Greatest World: Will To Power s***eries know that Vortex plays an important part in that series—but fans will see just how important Vortex' role in CGW is with the release of the final issue of ***Out of the Vortex.*** In this issue, Vortex gets fed up with humanity and decides to leave Earth forever... but rest assured that he won't be leaving without one final battle. It's Vortex versus every hero in the CGW universe in a story that Dark Horse says "could be the single most important issue in the history of Comics' Greatest World!" ***Out of the Vortex #12,*** a $2.50 comic written by *Michael Eury* and illustrated by *Randy Green* and *Mike Barriero,* is scheduled for October 13th release.

CSN CHARTS

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics speciality shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. X-Men 37 (Enhanced Edition)
2. Uncanny X-Men 317 (Enhanced Edition)
3. Spawn 24
4. Zero Hour: Crisis In Time 1
5. Zero Hour: Crisis In Time 0
6. Batman 0
7. Wolverine 86
8. Wetworks 2
9. Superman 0
10. WildCATs 12
11. Superman: The Man of Steel 0
12. Adventures of Superman 0
13. Detective Comics 0
14. Green Lantern 0
15. X-Men Unlimited 6
16. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 0
17. Batman: Shadow of the Bat 0
18. X-Force 39 (Enhanced Edition)
19. Amazing Spider-Man 394 (Enhanced Ed.)
20. Cable 16 (Enhanced Edition)
21. Punisher/Batman: Deadly Knights
22. Excalibur 82 (Enhanced Edition)
23. Web of Spider-Man 117 (Enhanced)
24. Spider-Man 51 (Enhanced Edition)
25. Hellshock 1
26. X-Force Annual 3
27. Spectacular Spider-Man 217 (Enhanced Edition)
28. Superboy 0
29. ClanDestine 1
30. Deadpool 3
31. Star Wars—Tales of the Jedi: The Freedon Nadd Uprising 1
32. Batman: Shadow of the Bat Annual 2
33. Steel 0
34. Maxx 10
35. Incredible Hulk 422
36. Flash 0
37. Fantastic Four 392
38. Brigade 11
39. Deathblow 8
40. Deathblow 7
41. Green Lantern Annual 3
42. Venom: Nights of Vengeance 3
43. Team Youngblood 12
44. Excalibur Annual 2
45. Beavis & Butt-Head 8
46. Starman 0
47. Spider-Man 2099 24
48. Primal Force 0
49. Sandman: Gallery of Dreams
50. Vengeance of Vampirella 5

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late September and October sales period.

1. X-Men 37 (Enhanced)
2. Uncanny X-Men 317 (Enhanced)
3. Punisher/Batman:Deadly Knights
4. Cable 16 (Enhanced)
5. X-Men Unlimited 6
6. X-Force 39
7. Amazing Spider-Man 394 (enhanced)
8. Spawn 24
9. WildCATs 12
10. Excalibur 82 (Enhanced)
11. Web of Spider-man 117 (Enhanced)
12. Wolverine 86
13. Wetworks 2
14. Spider-Man 51 (Enhanced)
15. X-Force Annual 3
16. Spectacular Spider-Man 217 (Enhanced)
16. Zero Hour: Crisis In Time 1
17. Zero Hour: Crisis In Time 0
18. ClanDestine 1
19. Batman: Shadow of the Bat Annual 2
20. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 0
21. Batman: Shadow of the Bat 0
22. Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi—The Freedon Nadd Uprising 1
23. Superman 0
24. Hellshock 1
25. Superman: The Man of Steel 0
26. Adventures of Superman 0
27. Deadpool 3
28. Brigade 11
29. Detective Comics 0
30. Green Lantern Annual 3
31. Green Lantern 0
32. Maxx 10
33. Venom: Nights of Vengeance 3
34. Troll II
35. Excalibur Annual 2
36. Deathblow 8
37. Deathblow 7
38. Team Youngblood 12
39. Sandman: Gallery of Dreams
40. Vengeance of Vampirella 5
41. Superboy 0
42. Geomancer 1
43. Beavis & Butt-Head 8
44. Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back 1
45. Ultraforce 1
46. Starman 0
47. Aliens: Earth Angel
48. Bloodstrike 12
49. Primal Force 0
50. Timewalker 1

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

1. Razor & Shi Special 1
2. Bone 15
3. Oh My Goddess 1
4. Cerebus 185
5. Dark Horse Presents 89
6. Ranma 1/2 Part 3 9
7. A Distant Soil 8
8. Savage Sword of Conan 226
9. Ninja High School 41
10. Maison Ikkoku Part 3 2

TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, hardcovers, trade paperbacks, portfolios, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the September sales period.

1. Magic: The Dark Collectors Cards
2. Jyhad Starter Set
3. Jyhad Booster Packs
4. Marvel Cards Universe 1994 Edition
5. Simpsons Comic Cards Series 2
6. Wizard 38
7. The Mask Returns TPB
8. Magic: The Gathering Booster Packs
9. Zero Hour: Crisis In Time TPB
10. DC Universe Master Series Trading Cards

Two Companies Deal Kirby Cards

Jack Kirby was the undisputed kind of comics—and if Comic Images and 21st Century Archives have their way, he'll be the king of trading cards as well. This October, both companies are releasing trading card series based on Jack Kirby's artwork: one company will look into the past to offer a retrospective of Kirby's already-known work, while the other will feature a never-before-seen look at Kirby art and concepts that might have been.

Comic Images' ***Jack Kirby: The Unpublished Archives*** is a ninety-card series featuring heroes, villains, vehicles, and weapons originally illustrated for Ruby-Spears Productions; this art has never before been seen by comic fans, and it offers a rare look at a largely-overlooked aspect of Kirby's career. The series will be supplemented by special chromium cards, a three-card "Villains" subset, a Limited Edition Medallion Card, and a 24 Karat Gold Signature Card. The card backs will feature tributes to Kirby from noted comic creators. ***Jack Kirby: The Unpublished Archives,*** scheduled for late October release, is priced at $1.25 per pack.

A Comic Art Tribute to Jack Kirby Trading Cards, a fifty-card series from 21st Century Archives, offers a tribute to Jack Kirby's phenomenal creativity. The fifty-card series spotlights Kirby's work, featuring noteworthy art from his career as well as some never-before-released sketches. Additionally, the series will offer five Limited Edition Tribute Cards created by well-known comic artists. *Greg Theakston* supplies the text for the card backs. Five Diamond-Chrome chase cards are also included. ***A Comic Art Tribute To Jack Kirby Trading Cards,*** priced at $1.75 per eight-card pack, are scheduled for early November release.

And speaking of Kirby cards, two companies are offering Jack Kirby Phone Cards; each phone credit card offers a preset amount of long-distance phone credit, but the cards themselves have the potential to become rare collectibles. CDG is offering a three-card series, ***Jack Kirby "Unseen Works" Phone Cards,*** featuring one $6 and two $12 phone cards, each featuring "unseen works" by Kirby; the production on this set is limited to 5000 individually numbered sets, priced at $38.95 per set. GTS is offering a ***Jack Kirby Tribute Phone Card,*** featuring a photo of the King on the front and $20 in long-distance phone credit; this 10,000 copy limited edition collectible is priced at $35.95. As with all specialty items of this nature, you should talk to the folks at your local comic shop and let 'em know that you're interested—and tell 'em that you heard about it in ***CSN***...

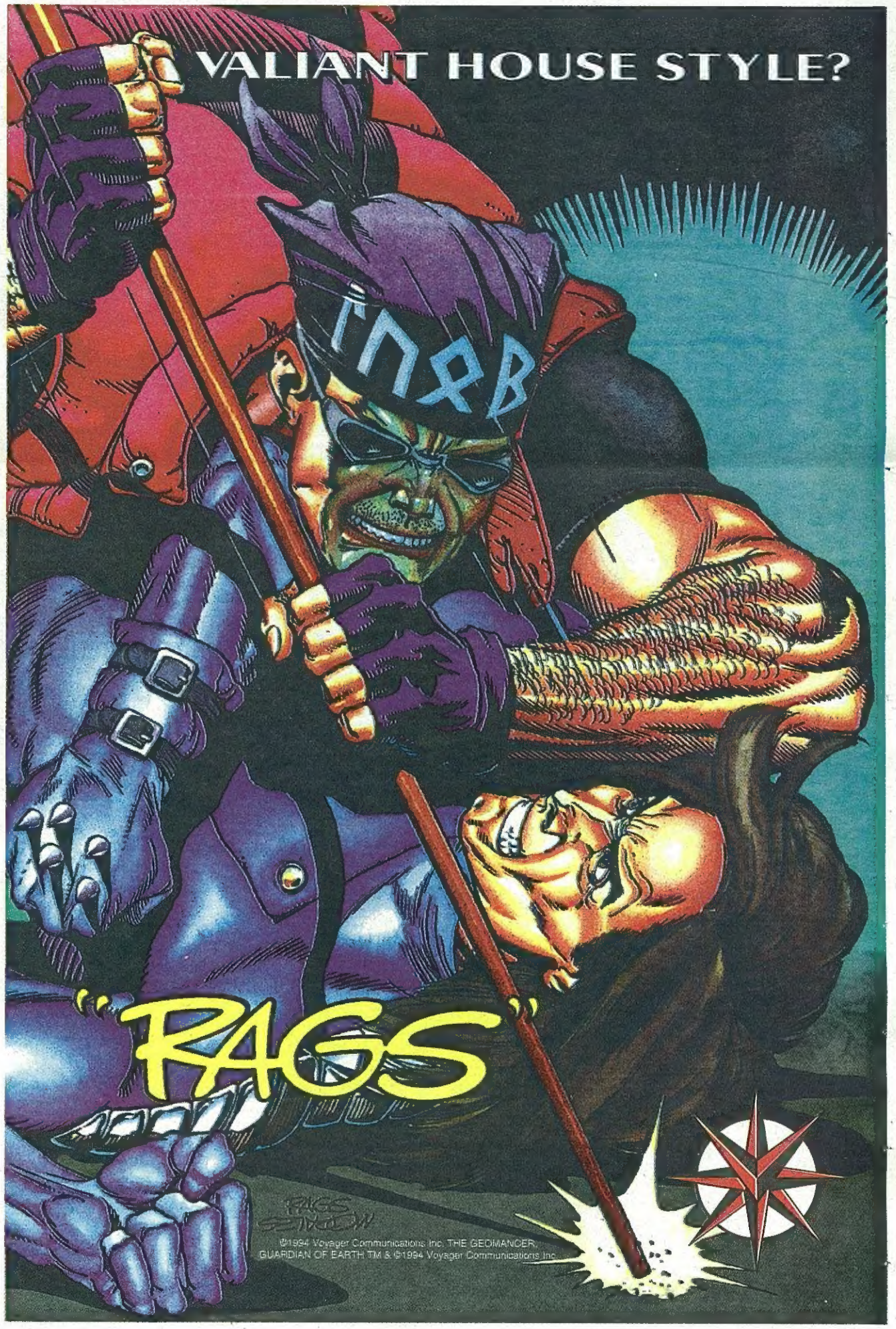
Entity Believes In Aster-ology

When Entity Comics released their ***Aster Ashcan Edition*** last spring, even they were surprised by the overwhelming response it elicited. "We've been getting constant calls about this book since the ashcan was released last May, publisher *Don Chin* said. "Judging by the response we've been getting, this book will be very hot." Just how how will be evident this fall, when the first issue of the ***Aster*** series debuts.

Aster is the story of a powerful being created by Celestial Guardians to seek and destroy worlds that they have judged unworthy of survival. "Aster can absorb and transform infinite amounts of cosmic energy," *Ronaldo Roxas*, co-writer of the series with his brother *Narcisco*, said. "He can cause a planet to collapse unto itself by transforming the energy within, hastening its stellar evolution." The series is illustrated by newcomer *Oliver Isabedra*, while fan-favorite *Jae Lee* supplies the art for the foil-enhanced cover for the first issue and *Joe Quesada* and *Jimmy Palmiotti* illustrate the cover for the second issue. ***Aster #1,*** a 32-page full-color comic scheduled for October release, is priced at $2.95.

Spider-Man Is Even More Animated In New Series

Spider-Man has always been one of the more animated heroes in the Marvel Universe—but this fall, he'll be animated in more ways than one! Spider-Man is slated to star in his own animated television series this fall—and where there's an animated series, can a comic book be far away?... ***Spider-Man Adventures*** is the newest Spider-Man title from Marvel; it features stories inspired by and in the style of the animated television show (apparently, the word ***Adventures*** means "inspired by an animated television series"—as in ***Batman Adventures, X-Men Adventures,*** and ***WildCATs Adventures).*** The first issue, written by *Nel Yomtov* and illustrated by *Alex Saviuk*, features the origin of the Lizard. ***Spider-Man Adventures #1*** will be released in two formats: a deluxe foil-stamped embossed cover edition, priced at $2.95, and a standard non-enhanced version priced at $1.50. Both versions are scheduled for October 27th release.


VALIANT HOUSE STYLE?
"RAGS"
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Paradox-ical Announcement Heralds New DC Imprint

For more than a decade now, DC has pushed mainstream comics to the edge—and beyond—in a variety of projects published under a variety of imprints. In the 1980's, DC took the superhero concept to new levels with ***Ronin, Watchmen,*** and ***The Dark Knight Returns.*** Later in that decade, they revamped comics horror, which had been mired in the EC-derivative mode for far too long, via sophisticated titles like ***Swamp Thing*** and ***Hellblazer.***

Now DC is ready to push comics in new directions with a mature, cutting-edge imprint that merges the sensibilities of mainstream literature with comics' graphic storytelling abilities. The result is Paradox Press—which, paradoxically, is actually three imprints!

Paradox Press is a logical outgrowth of an earlier DC experiment, Piranha Press. In the late 80's and early 90's, Piranha ventured into the realm of mature comics with a decidedly non-comics philosophical approach; the result was a mixture of successes (***Gregory, Epicurus the Sage***) and enigmatic existential graphic novels that appealed to too small a core audience to be financially successful. Paradox Press has been described by some as a continuation of the Piranha imprint, but editor Andrew Helfer feels that's too not quite accurate; while Piranha had no distinctive "feel" that helped customers identify a product as a Piranha book, Paradox has three distinct sub-imprints that have their own identities and their own target audiences, giving the imprint an identity of its own.

Factoid Books, Paradox Mystery, and Paradox Fiction... these are the three lines that comprise Paradox Press. Each presents a different type of story targeted at readers who are looking for something more than standard superhero comics. In fact, Helfer is optimistic that Paradox's titles will appeal to many readers who don't consider themselves comics fans at all.

NOW, MICKEY WAS MY UNCLE. SORT OF. MY MOTHER'S SISTER'S EX-HUSBAND. HE WAS THE FAMILY WEIRDO: A JUNKIE BEFORE IT WAS FASHIONABLE. THE VERY IMAGE OF DARK DEEDS AND UNMENTIONABLE CRIMES.
NOT EXACTLY THE KIND OF FATHER I WANTED SUDDENLY THRUST ON ME EIGHT O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING ON A SCHOOL DAY.

Factoid

Factoid is a series of reality-based comics designed for browsers as well as readers. Each book features over two hundred pages of story and art focused on a particular theme—but the contents are broken down into short pieces that can be read individually or en masse. The books present the work of a variety of comics creators—but Factoid is a concept-driven imprint, not a creator-driven imprint, so the emphasis is on the stories themselves.

Factoid's debut title is ***The Big Book of Urban Legends,*** a 224-page compendium of offbeat purportedly-true stories that have been passed down from friend to friend over the past few decades. These are the sort of stories that form the essence of modern urban folklore; everyone claims to know someone who knows the person that these events happened to... "The Poodle in the Microwave," "The Mouse in the Coke Bottle," "Spiders in the Bouffant"... they're all here, along with two hundred more amazing tales of stories that are just too good to be true. Taken from the works of urban legends compiler Jan Harold Brunvand, ***The Big Book of Urban Legends*** is adapted to comics by Robert Loren Fleming and Robert F. Boyd, Jr.; artists who contribute to the first volume include ARt Adams, Christian Alamy, Terry Austin, Jackson Guice, Phil Jiminez, Kevin Maguire, Mike Mignola, Kevin Nowlan, Val Semeiks, and Ty Templeton.

HI, I'M PROFESSOR JAN HAROLD BRUNVAND AND I'M HERE TO TELL YOU ONE OF THE "HOTTEST" URBAN LEGENDS GOING.
IT'S CALLED...
CURSES! BROILED AGAIN!
"A YOUNG WOMAN WHO WAS TO BE THE MAID OF HONOR IN HER BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING DECIDED AT THE LAST MINUTE TO GET A QUICK TAN FOR THE OCCASION.
A PERFECT TAN
"BUT SHE SOON DISCOVERED THAT HER LOCAL TANNING SALON HAD A RULE TO PROTECT CUSTOMERS FROM OVEREXPOSURE.
30 MINUTES PER DAY LIMIT
NO EXCEPTIONS!
"SO SHE CIRCUMVENTED THAT BY SIGNING UP AT FOUR DIFFERENT SALONS...
THE BRONZE AGE
"...THUS GETTING FOUR TIMES THE RECOMMENDED DOSAGE.
©1994 Paradoxall art

The Big Book of Urban Legends, a $12.95 book, is scheduled for November 3rd release. Future Factoid releases include ***The Big Book of Death, The Big Book of Weirdos,*** and ***The Big Book of Conspiracies.***

Paradox Mystery

From the earliest days of comics, the medium has frequently ventured into the mystery-detective field—and, in fact, many of its best-known characters reveal a strong detective influence. But Paradox Mystery isn't Sherlock Holmes or Batman; instead, the imprint attempts to bring the best elements of contemporary mystery fiction to comics in a series of original titles by creators from the world of comics, mystery, and film.

Paradox Mystery debuts with ***La Pacifica,*** a three-part story that begins with a mad gunman's killing spree at La Pacifica motel. Duncan Cooper, the only survivor of the massacre, is obsessed by the event that changed (and nearly ended) his life... so obsessed that he begins to investigate the background of the gun-wielding murderer. What he discovers is the existence of another person, a mysterious, beautiful woman who travels from town to town, leaving in her wake a series of madmen... and a series of senseless killing rampages. In order to get past this traumatic event, Cooper must find this

woman to learn the reasons behind his own near-death.

La Pacifica is written by novelist-screenwriter Joel Rose and screenwriter-director Amos Poe; the three-issue miniseries is illustrated by Tayyar Ozkan, whose art has appeared in ***Heavy Metal***. Each issue will feature ninety-six pages of story and art in the Paradox Compact format (5 1/2" x 8" squarebound trade paperback); ***La Pacifica #1***, a $4.95 book, is scheduled for December 1st release. Future Paradox Mystery releases include ***Road to Perdition*** by Max Allan Collins and Richard Piers Rayner; ***Family Man*** by Jerome Charyn and Joe Staton; ***Hunter's Heart*** by Neil Barrett, Jr., and Randy DuBurke; and ***Green Candles*** by Tom DeHaven and Robin Smith.

Paradox Fiction

Paradox' third imprint is perhaps its most far-reaching. Paradox Fiction isn't linked by story type; instead, the imprint is dedicated to fiction with something to say. "Its primary imperative is to publish well-crafted, engaging novels about the human condition," DC's Patricia Jeres said. Books bearing the Paradox Fiction imprint are, in many ways, the boldest, most experimental titles in the Paradox line, appealing to readers who realize that comic books can deal with the same literary themes as any other form of fiction.

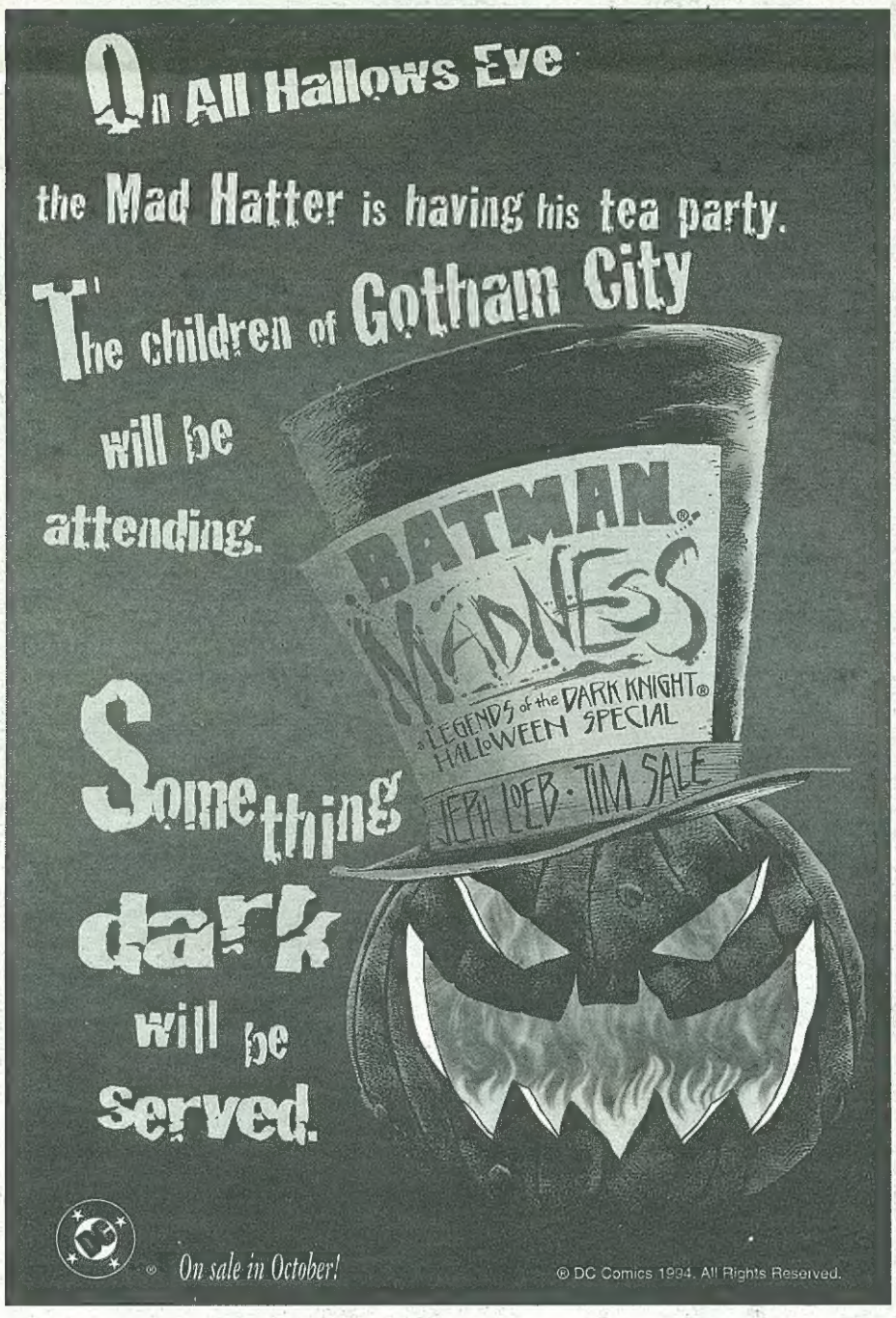
Brooklyn Dreams, the initial Paradox Fiction offering, is the story of one man's life and the events and dreams that helped shape it. The retrospective story has a surreal quality that merges the sharp reality and the distorted perspective of memory. The story is the work of acclaimed comics writer J.M. DeMatteis, well known for his work on the moody, evocative ***Moonshadow;*** he is joined by artist Glenn Barr, whose art ranges from photo-realistic to disturbingly surreal, depending on the demands of the far-reaching story.

Brooklyn Dreams, a four-issue miniseries, debuts on December 8th. Each issue contains 96 pages in the Paradox Compact format, priced at $4.95. Future Paradox Fiction releases include ***The Project*** by John Figueroa and Kirk Etienne and the long-awaited ***Stuck Rubber Baby*** by Howard Cruse.

THEY COULDN'T HAVE LUNATICS AT THE TABLES. I TRIED TO DRAW HIM OUT. I TRIED TO FIND OUT WHAT WAS BUGGING HIM...
HE STARTED TO RAMBLE ON AGAIN ABOUT THE GIRL...

These titles are just the beginning for Paradox Press; group editor Andrew Helfer already has a variety of projects in the works. Rather than rolling the line out prematurely and having to deal with long gaps between Paradox releases, Helfer and DC have waited until they had enough projects near completion that they could give the line a strong rollout. Helfer understands that every reader might not enjoy every title to appear under the Paradox imprint; what he hopes, though, is that readers who are looking for something more than what they're currently finding on the comic shelves will take a look at the wealth of material that Paradox will be offering in the near future.

by Cliff Biggers


On All Hallows Eve
the Mad Hatter is having his tea party.
The children of Gotham City
will be attending.
BATMAN MADNESS
LEGENDS of the DARK KNIGHT HALLOWEEN SPECIAL
JEPH LOEB · TIM SALE
Something dark will be served.
On sale in October!
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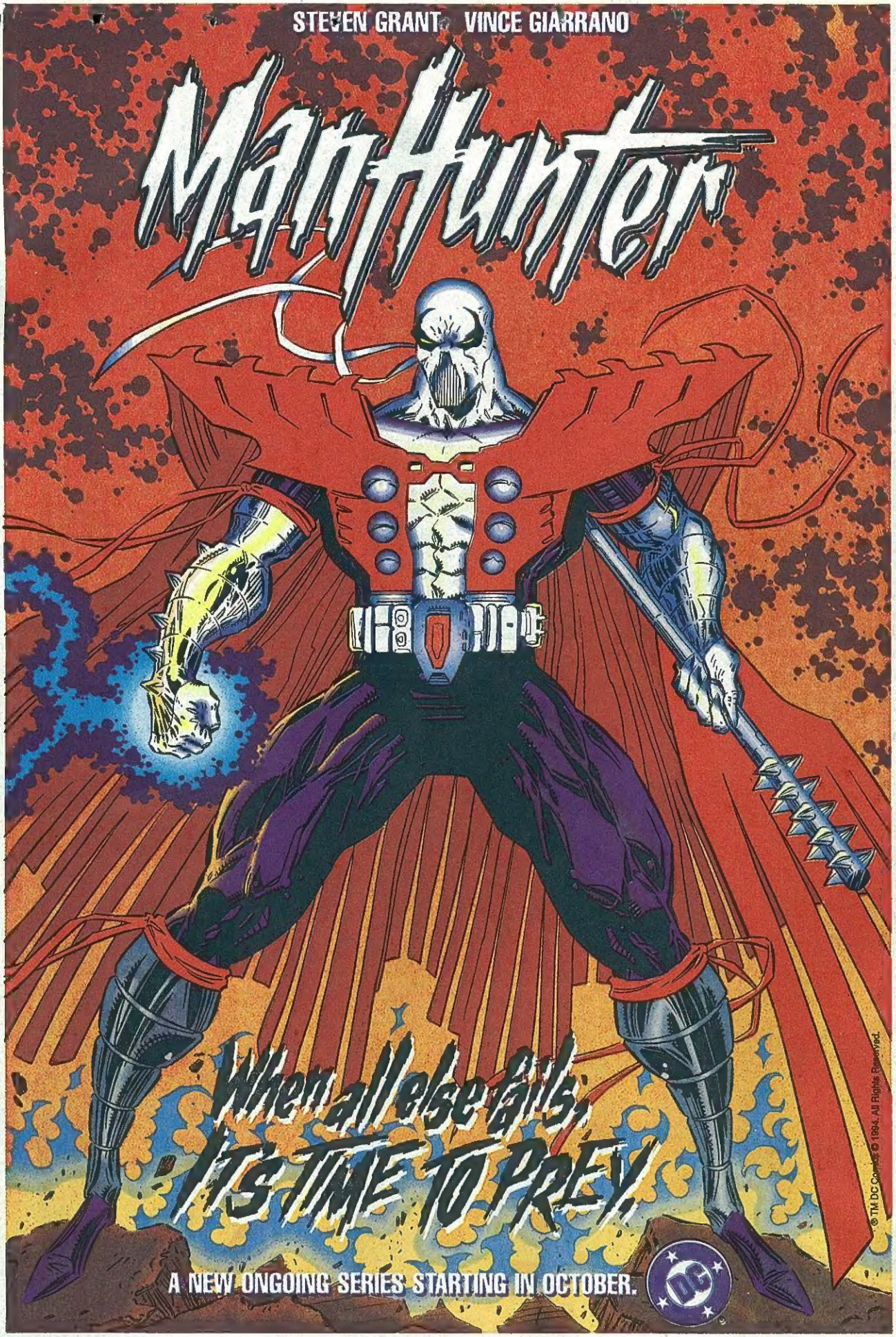
STEVEN GRANT VINCE GIARRANO
ManHunter
When all else fails,
IT'S TIME TO PREY.
A NEW ONGOING SERIES STARTING IN OCTOBER.
DC
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